

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of the Claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the Claims in the application.

1 Claim 1 (currently amended): An entrails removal instrument for making a hollow cavity
2 in a body of a bait fish, ~~including comprising~~:

3 a. an elongate ~~body~~section having two straight parallel longitudinal sides, said
4 ~~body~~elongate section forming a curved groove ~~between~~ through the entire length
5 of the elongate section and through the centerline between said longitudinal sides;
6 b. an end section, said end section extending from said elongate ~~section~~ body and
7 tapering gradually from the longitudinal sides to a rounded point such that the
8 curved groove continues through the end section; and
9 c. a plurality of tines emanating from a surface of the instrument, wherein at least
10 one tine of said plurality of tines emanates from the end section and is directed
11 away from the rounded point and towards the elongate ~~body~~section, wherein at
12 least one tine of said plurality of tines emanates from a location away from said
13 sides and away from said end section, wherein said entrails removal instrument is
14 ~~adapted to fit into the body of the bait fish and form a hollow cavity when the~~
15 ~~instrument is inserted into the body, rotated and removed~~ has a width as measured
16 between the longitudinal sides in the range between about one half inch and one
17 inch and an overall length in the range between about five inches and about seven
18 inches.

1 Claim 2 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein said instrument is
2 made from steel.

1 Claim 3 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein said instrument is
2 made from stainless steel.

1 Claim 4 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein the at least one
2 tine that emanates from the end section includes a plurality of tines.

1 Claim 5 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein the plurality of
2 tines emanate from the surface of the instrument at an angle in the range between about
3 15 degrees and about 45 degrees.

1 Claim 6 (original) The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein the rounded point
2 on the end section includes is honed to a blade surface ~~at the rounded point.~~

1 Claim 7 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein the instrument is
2 one integral piece.

1 Claim 8 (original): The entrails removal instrument of claim 1, wherein the bait fish is a
2 herring.

1 Claim 9: (previously presented): A method of making a plug-cut bait from a bait fish
2 having a head, body, and tail, the method including acts of:

- 3 a) cutting the head off the bait fish with a knife while leaving the fish body and tail
4 intact;
- 5 b) inserting an entrails removal instrument into the fish body to a position forward of
6 the tail, wherein said entrails removal instrument comprises an elongate instrument
7 body having two straight parallel longitudinal sides, said instrument body forming a
8 curved groove between said longitudinal sides; an end section, said end section
9 extending from said instrument body and tapering to a rounded point; and a plurality
10 of tines emanating from a surface of the instrument, wherein at least one tine of said
11 plurality of tines emanates from the end section and is directed away from the
12 rounded point and towards the elongate body, wherein at least one tine of said
13 plurality of tines emanates from a location away from said sides and away from the
14 end section, wherein said entrails removal instrument ~~is adapted to fit into the body of~~
15 ~~the bait fish and form a hollow cavity when inserted into the body, rotated and~~
16 ~~removed~~ has a width as measured between the longitudinal sides in the range between
17 about one half inch and one inch and an overall length in the range between
18 five inches and about seven inches;

- 19 c) rotating said entrails removal instrument; and
20 d) removing the entrails removal instrument, whereby the viscera of the fish
21 are removed leaving the body and tail intact with a neat hollow cavity.

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2 Claim 10 (previously presented): The method of claim 9, wherein the entrails remover is
3 inserted at least 2 inches into the fish body.

1 Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 9, further including moving the entrails
2 removal instrument in a lateral motion.

1 Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11, wherein the act of rotating includes rotating
2 at least 360°.

1 Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 12, wherein the method further comprises
2 inserting at least one fishing hook attached to a fishing line into the hollow cavity and
3 pushing it out through the fish body to form a bait.

1 Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 9, wherein the bait fish is herring.

1 Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 13, wherein the at least one fishing hook
2 includes a plurality of fishing hooks.

1 Claim 16 (original) A plug-cut bait made according to the method of claim 12.

1 Claim 17 (original): A plug-cut bait made according to the method of claim 13.

1 Claim 18 (original): A plug-cut bait made according to the method of claim 15.

1 Claim 19 (original): The plug-cut bait of claim 16, wherein the bait fish is chosen from
2 the group consisting of herring, anchovy, sardine and smelt.

1 Claim 20 (original): The plug-cut bait of claim 17, wherein the bait fish is chosen from
2 the group consisting of herring, anchovy, sardine and smelt.

1 Claim 21 (original): The plug-cut bait of claim 18, wherein the bait fish is chosen from
2 the group consisting of herring, anchovy, sardine and smelt.

1 Claim 22 (previously presented): The instrument of claim 1, wherein the groove
2 comprises a substantially continuously curved groove.

1 Claim 23 (currently amended): The instrument of claim 1, wherein said sides comprise
2 straight parallel longitudinal edges of said ~~body~~elongate section and wherein none of
3 said plurality of tines emanate from said edges.

1 Claim 24 (previously presented): The method of claim 9 wherein said groove comprises a
2 substantially continuous curved groove.

1 Claim 25 (currently amended): The method of claim 9, wherein said sides comprise
2 straight parallel longitudinal edges of said ~~body~~elongate section and wherein none of
3 said plurality of tines emanate from said edges.

1 Claim 26 (currently amended): An entrails removal instrument for making a hollow
2 cavity in a body of a bait fish, ~~including~~comprising:
3 a. an elongate ~~body~~ section having two straight parallel longitudinal sides, said
4 ~~body~~elongate section forming a curved groove through the centerline between
5 said longitudinal sides, said sides comprising straight parallel longitudinal edges
6 of said body;
7 b. an end section, said end section extending from said elongate body and tapering
8 gradually from the longitudinal sides to a rounded point, such that curved groove
9 extends through the end section;
10 c. a plurality of tines emanating from a surface of the instrument, wherein at least
11 one tine of said plurality of tines emanates from the end section and is directed
12 away from the rounded point and towards the elongate ~~body~~ section, wherein said
13 entrails removal instrument ~~is adapted to fit into the body of the bait fish and form~~
14 ~~a cavity when the instrument is inserted into the body, rotated and removed~~ has a
15 width as measured between the longitudinal edges in the range between about one
16 half inch and one inch and an overall length in the range between about five
17 inches and about seven inches .

1 Claim 27 (currently amended): A method of making a plug-cut bait from a bait fish
2 having a head, body, and tail, the method including the acts of:

- 3 a. cutting the head off the bait fish with a knife while leaving the fish body and
4 tail intact;
- 5 b. inserting an entrails removal instrument to a position forward of the tail,
6 wherein the entrails removal instrument comprises an elongate instrument body
7 having two straight parallel longitudinal sided, said instrument body forming a
8 curved groove between said longitudinal sides, said sides comprising straight
9 parallel longitudinal edges of said body; an end section extending from said
10 instrument body and gradually tapering to a rounded point; and a plurality of tines
11 emanating from a surface of the instrument, wherein at least one of said plurality
12 of tines emanates from the end section and is directed away from the rounded
13 point and towards the elongate body, wherein said entrails removal instrument is
14 adapted to fit into the body of the bait fish and form a hollow cavity when inserted
15 into the body, rotated and removed has a width as measured between the
16 longitudinal edges in the range between about one half inch and one inch and an
17 overall length in the range between about five inches and about seven inches;
- 18 c. rotating said entrails removal instrument; and
- 19 d. removing the entrails removal instrument, whereby the viscera of the fish are
20 removed leaving the body and tail intact with a neat hollow cavity.

1 Claim 28 (previously presented): The entrails removal instrument of claim 26, wherein
2 all of the tines of said plurality of tines emanate from the end section.

1 Claim 29 (previously presented): The entrails removal instrument of claim 26, wherein
2 said instrument comprises steel.

1 Claim 30 (previously presented): The entrails removal instrument of claim 26, wherein
2 said instrument comprises plastic